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Folktales from the Upper Panjáb.—By the REV. C. SWYNNERTON,
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“In Winter’s tedious nights, sit by the fire
With good old folks, and let them tell thee tales!”

The tales and stories which I propose to present to the notice of members have been literally gathered on winter’s nights from the lips of the peasantry of the Upper Panjáb. So far as I am aware, not one of them has appeared in print; but in any case, whether some few of them have been published or not, there must still exist in the ensuing series a peculiarity of treatment and a freshness of incident, together with many other important points of difference, which will mark this collection as an original effort, interesting in itself, and interesting too for purposes of comparison. The story-tellers were partly Panjábís, and partly Pátháns; some of them were tottering old men, and some of them youths, robust and strong. They are the tales which are the delight of the village Hazráh on winter’s nights, when icy winds are blowing, and when the young men gather round the blazing fire to hear of the fantastic deeds of giants and fairies, and the adventures of animals and men, or when the village guest, if not too tired to sit up, alternates the recital of fictitious wonders by news from the great world, or commands the attention of auditors as simple as himself by circumstantial accounts of most disastrous chances, of moving accidents of his own, by flood and fell. It was at the little village of Gházi on the river Indus, thirty miles above Aṭak, that many of these stories were

told to the compiler, and translated to him *vivá voce* from the Panjábí by his hospitable host and attached friend Thomas Lambert Barlow, Esq. There within sight and hearing of the majestic river of history and romance, in a district exclusively pastoral, close to the fabled mountain of Gangar, in the midst of many a ruined temple and fortress of an earlier race and a former faith, on ground historical and even classical though now so obscure and unknown, these interesting gleanings of old-world folklore were carefully gathered and stored. Exactly opposite lies a line of rocky hills overlooking the rushing waters of the river. On this spot stood an ancient city of fabulous strength and vast extent, the home of four Hindú brothers, all of them kings. Each of the low peaks of which there are several is crowned by a tower, a palace or a temple, while traces of connecting walls and ruined dwellings traverse the ground on all sides to the very edge of the cliff. This city according to tradition was so vast that one of its gates was close to Hund, an equally ancient site, which stands on the same bank about twenty miles to the south. What was the name of this once mighty capital? Possibly it may survive among the popular names of the peaks and ravines on which it was built, as Gálláh, Pihúr, Gharri dhá Lar, Parri dhá Kátthá, Gaddhi dhá Kátthá, Gangáriánh dhá Kassi, Bhoru dhá Kátthá. Hund has been identified as the spot where “Sikander Bádsháh” crossed over his conquering army of Greeks, and undoubtedly it possessed an important ferry from the very earliest ages.

A few miles to the north of Gházi where the hills begin to close in, we can almost see the collection of hamlets known as Torbela, the inhabitants of which are addicted to the curious vice of eating clay, as people in other parts are given to the consumption of opium. Opposite Torbelá stands the warlike independent village of Kabbal. It is here, between these two rival villages not more than twelve miles from Gházi, that the Indus breaks through the gorge of the restraining peaks on either side, the last spurs of the Himálayas, forming the territory, in part independent, but partly under our dominion, which the inhabitants call Yákistán. How beautiful is the view miles and miles up the river, with the descending lines of the precipitous mountains, one behind the other, receding ever more and more into blue haze, until crowned by the distant snows! As one sits in the warm winter sun, among the river boulders at Gházi, where the gold-washers are busy at work, and as one directs one's gaze northwards, past the bare tawny hills into the remote distance, one thinks how all this land was once in the hands of a dynasty of Greeks, of helmed Menander, or lightning-wielding Antialkidas, whose coins attest the excellency of the arts in these remote places when under their accomplished sway, but of whose influence every living trace seems to have disappeared, unless, in the classical designs of the village basketwork, or in the graceful devices in red and green on the

country nambdás of felt, one may be permitted to detect a remnant, however slight, of Grecian taste and western refinement. Passing on to a succeeding era, one remembers the local tradition of king Rásálu who, from those very heights to the left, hurled at his rival on the eastern bank a mighty defiance in the shape of a huge mass of greenstone weighing a maund and a half. Five kos it hurtled through the air, and it still reposes on the spot where it fell. Or, one longs for a holiday, however short, and for money and men, to penetrate beyond the tributary Sirin, famous for mársír, and to visit the remoter hills of Thánnaul, the district of Nawáb Akram Khán, whose Summer House gleams from a distant peak, there, among much besides, to search for and to find the "*Haldí Dillí*," or great Rocking Stone, of which the people tell, and which though of towering size can be moved, say they, by a touch of a single finger.

However, it is time to address myself to the Folktales. I shall attempt in this issue little or no commentary, but I would leave each one of them to speak for itself, merely premising that the first series shall consist of a selected number of fables and short stories, and the next of longer and more ambitious stories having much resemblance in general character to the tales in the "Arabian Nights."

I. THE WEAVER AND THE PROPHECY.

A village weaver went out to cut firewood. Climbing a tree he stood upon one of the branches, which he began to hew off close to the trunk. "My friend," said a traveller passing below, "you are standing on the very limb which you are cutting off. In a few minutes you and it will both fall to the ground." The weaver unconcernedly continued his task and soon both the branch and himself fell to the foot of the tree as the traveller had foretold. Limping after him the weaver cried, "Sir, you are God, you are God, Sir, you are God—what you prophesied has come to pass." "Tut, man, tut," answered the traveller, "I'm not God." "Nay, but you are," replied the weaver, "and now pray, O pray, tell me when I am to die?" To be rid of his importunity, the traveller answered, "You will die on the day on which your mouth bleeds," and he pursued his way.

Some days had elapsed when the weaver happened to be making some scarlet cloth, and as he had frequently to separate the threads with his mouth, a piece of the coloured fibre by chance stuck in one of his front teeth. Catching sight of this in a glass, and instantly concluding that it was blood, and that his last hour was at hand, he entered his hut, and said "Wife, wife, I'm sick; in a few moments I shall be dead: let me lie down, and go, dig my grave!" So he lay down on his bed, and turning his face to the wall, closed his eyes, and began deliberately to die. And indeed, such is the power of the imagination among these people, that he would have died with-

out doubt, if a customer had not called for his clothes. He seeing the man's condition and hearing of the prophecy, asked to examine his mouth. "Ah," said he, "what an idiot are you? Call you this blood?" and taking out the thread he held it before the weaver's eyes. The weaver, as a man reprieved from death, was overjoyed, and springing to his feet he resumed his work, having been rescued, as he imagined, from the very brink of the grave.

II. THE THREE WEAVERS.

There were three weavers, all brothers, who lived in the same village. One day the eldest said to the others "I am going to buy a milch buffalo." So he went to a farmer, paid for the buffalo, and brought it home to his house.

The second brother was quite touched by the sight of it. He viewed its heads, its horns, and its teats, and then said "O brother, allow me to be a partner in this beautiful buffalo?" Said the elder, "I have paid for this beautiful buffalo twenty-two rupees. If you wish to be a partner in her, you had better go to the farmer, and pay him twenty-two rupees too, and then we shall have equal shares in her."

Shortly after the third brother came in and said, "O brother, you have allowed our brother to be a partner with you in this buffalo, won't you let me take a share too?" "Willingly," answered the other, "but first you must go to the farmer and pay him twenty-two rupees as we have done." So the third brother did so, while the farmer chuckled, saying, "This is a fine thing for me getting all this money for my skinny old buffalo!"

The three brothers now agreed that each one of them should have a day's milk from the buffalo in turn, and that each should bring his own pot. The two elder brothers had their turns, but when the third day came, the youngest said, "Alas! what shall I do? I have no pot in my house!" In this perplexity the eldest remarked, "This is a most difficult business, because you see if you milk the buffalo without a pot, the milk will be spilt. You had better milk her into your mouth." His ingenious solution of the problem was at once adopted, and the youngest brother milked the buffalo into his mouth. Going home he was met by his wife who asked, "Well, where is the milk?" Her husband answered, "I had no pot, so I had to milk the buffalo into my mouth." "O you did, did you," cried she, "and so your wife counts as no one? I am to have no milk? If I am not to have my share, in this house I refuse to remain." And she went off in anger to the house of her mother.

Then the three brothers went together to the headman of the village, and complained, begging him to order the woman to return to her husband. So the headman summoned her and said, "O woman, you may have your share of the milk too, just the same as your husband. Let him visit the

buffalo in the morning and drink the milk, and do you visit her in the evening." Said she, "But why could not my husband have said so? Now it is all right, and besides I shall be saved all the trouble of setting the milk for butter!"

III. THE WEAVER AND THE WATER-MELON.

Once upon a time a poor country weaver visited a town, where he saw a quantity of water-melons piled up one above the other in front of a baniá's shop. "Eggs of other birds there are," he said, "and I have seen them: but what bird's eggs are these eggs? These must be mare's eggs!" So he asked the baniá, "Are these eggs mare's eggs?" The baniá instantly cocked his ears, and perceiving that he was a simpleton answered, "Yes, these bird's eggs are mare's eggs." "What is the price?" "One hundred rupees apiece" said the baniá. The simple weaver took out his bag of money and counting out the price, bought one of the melons and carried it off. As he went along the road, he began to say to himself, "When I get home I will put this egg in a warm corner of my house, and by and bye a foal will be born, and when the foal is big enough, I shall mount it and ride it to the house of my father-in-law. Won't he be astonished?" As the day was unusually hot, he stopped at a pool of water to bathe.* But first of all he deposited the melon most carefully in the middle of a low bush, and then he proceeded to undress himself. His garments were not half laid aside, when out from the bush sprang a hare, and the weaver, snatching up part of his clothing while the rest hung about his legs in disorder, made desperate efforts to chase and overtake the hare, crying out, "Ah there goes the foal, wo, old boy, wo, wo!" But he ran in vain, for the hare easily escaped, and was soon out of sight.

The poor weaver reconciled himself to his loss as best he could, "Kismet!" cried he: "And as for the egg, it is of course of no use now and not worth returning for, since the foal has left it." So he made his way home and said to his wife, "O wife, I have had a great loss this day!" "Why," said she, "what have you done?" "I paid one hundred rupees for a mare's egg, but while I stopped on the road to bathe, the foal jumped out and ran away." His wife replied, "Ah, what a pity! if you had only brought the foal here, I would have got on his back and ridden him to my father's house!" Hearing this, the weaver fell into a rage, and pulling a stick out of his loom began to belabour his wife, crying, "What, you would break the back of a young foal? Ah you slut, let me break yours!"

After this he went out, and began to lament his loss to his friends and neighbours, warning them all, "If any of you should see a stray foal, don't forget to let me know." To the village herdsmen especially he

* Literally: On his way home he tarried *ut alvum exoneraret*.

related his wonderful story, how the foal came out of the egg, and ran away, and would perhaps be found grazing on the common lands somewhere. One or two of the farmers, however, to whom the tale was repeated said, "What is this nonsense? Mares never have eggs. Where did you put this egg of yours?" "I put my egg in a bush," said the weaver, "near the tank on the way to the town." The farmers said, "Come and show us!" "All right," assented the weaver, "come along." When they arrived at the spot the melon was found untouched in the middle of the bush. "Here it is," cried the weaver, "here's my mare's egg. This is the thing out of which my foal jumped." The farmers turned the melon over and over, and said, "But what part of this egg did the foal jump out of?" So the weaver took the melon and began to examine it. "Out of this," cried one of the farmers, snatching back the melon, "no foal ever jumped. You are a simpleton and you have been cheated. We'll show you what the foals are." So he smashed the melon on a stone, and giving the seeds to the weaver, said, "Here are foals enough for you," while the farmers themselves amid much laughter sat down and ate up the fruit.

IV. THE WEAVER-GIRL.

A certain quarter of a village was inhabited only by weavers. One day a fine young weaver-girl was sweeping out the house, and as she swept, she said to herself, "My father and mother and all my relations belong to this village. It would be a good thing if I married in this village and settled here too, so that we should always be together." "But," continued she, "if I did marry here, and had a son, and if my son were to die, oh how my aunts and my friends would come, and how they would all bewail him!" Thinking of this she laid her broom against the wall and began to cry. In came her aunts and her friends, and seeing her in such distress, they all began to cry too. Then came her father and her uncles and her brothers, and they also began to cry most bitterly, but not one of them had the wit to say, "What is the matter? For whom is this wailing?" At last, when the noise and the weeping had continued for some time, a neighbour said, "What bad news have you had? Who is dead here?" One of the uncles answered, "I don't know; these women know; ask one of them!" At this point, the headman arrived at the spot, and cried, "Stop, stop this hubbub, good people, and let us find out what is the matter." Addressing himself to an old woman, he said, "What is all this disturbance in the village for?" "I don't know," answered she, "when I came here, I found this weaver-girl crying about something." Then the weaver-girl on being questioned, said, "I was weeping because I could not help thinking that if I married in this village and had a son, and if my son were to die, all my aunts would come round me and bewail him. The thought of this made

me cry." On hearing this, the headman and his followers began to laugh, and the crowd dispersed.

V. THE TWO WEAVERS AND THE GRASSHOPPERS.

Two weavers took guns and went out for a day's sport. As they passed through the fields, one of them espied an immense grasshopper sitting on a *mádár* plant, which as they approached flew on to the shoulder of his companion. "See, see, there he is!" cried he, and levelling his piece, he shot his friend through the heart.

VI. THE OLD WEAVER AND THE CAMEL'S FOOTPRINTS.

One night a camel trespassing in a weaver's field, left there the marks of his feet. In the morning the owner brought to the spot the oldest weaver in the village, expecting that he would be able to explain what manner of animal had trodden down his corn. The old man on seeing the footprints both laughed and cried. Said the people "O father, you both laugh and cry. What does this mean?" "I cry," said he, "because I think to myself, 'What will these poor children do for some one to explain these things to them when I am dead,' and I laugh, because, as for these foot-prints, I know not what they are!"

VII. GREEBA THE WEAVER.

At the village of Bhurran lived an old weaver named Greeba who for a wonder was shrewd enough. It happened that Habbíb Khán the *lambardár* laid a tax on the weavers' houses at the rate of two rupees for every doorway. When Greeba heard of this, he tore down his door and laying it on his shoulders carried it off to the Khán's. "Here, Khán," said he with a profound salaam, "I have heard you want doorways, so I have brought you mine. I also hear you want the sidewalls, and I am now going to fetch them too." Hearing this, the Khán laughed and said, "O Greeba the weaver, take back your door, your tax is paid."

VIII. THE BLACK BEE AND THE BLACK BEETLE.

A villager once reared a black bee and a black beetle together, imagining them to be brothers. In looks they were not unlike, and the "boom" which they uttered seemed precisely the same. One day he set them flying. The bee lighted on a rose, while the beetle settled on a dunghill. "Ah," said the village seer, "these creatures are like ourselves, and it is only by observation that we can say who is worthy of friendship and who is not."

IX. THE GARDINER'S WIFE, THE POTTER'S WIFE, AND THE CAMEL.

A gardener's wife and a potter's wife once hired a camel to carry their goods to market. One side of the beast was well laden with vegetables,

and the other with pottery. As they went along the road, the camel kept stretching back his long neck to pilfer the vegetables. Upon observing this, the potter's wife began laughing, and jested her friend on her ill-luck. "Sister," said she, "at the end of the journey there will not be a single vegetable left—you'll have nothing whatever to sell!" "It is true you are luckier than I am," answered the gardener's wife, "but remember the first to win are the last to lose!" When they arrived at the market place, the camel man ordered his animal to kneel down, but the weight on one side was so much greater, by this time, than the weight on the other, that the camel gave a lurch as he got on his foreknees, and crushed the pottery between himself and the earth, so that most of it was smashed, and what was not smashed was cracked. So it ended that the gardener's wife had something at least to sell, but the potter's wife had nothing.

X. THE MULE AND THE TRAVELLER.

A certain mule, having a great opinion of himself, began braying pretentiously, so that every one stopped to say "Who is that?" A traveller passing by at that moment said to him, "O Sir, pray tell me what was the name of your mother?" "My mother's name was Mare" answered the mule proudly. "And what was your father's name?" continued the traveller. "Be off," said the mule, "be off! None of your jesting with me. You are impertinent!"

XI. THE TIGER AND THE CAT.

Tigers at first were ignorant, until the king of the tigers once came to the cat and begged him for lessons. The cat consenting taught the tiger to watch, to crouch, to spring, and all the other accomplishments so familiar to the race. At last when he thought he had learnt everything the cat had to impart, the tiger made a spring at his teacher intending to tear him and eat him. Instantly the cat ran nimbly up a tree whither the tiger was unable to follow. "Come down," cried the tiger, "come down instantly!" "No, no," replied the cat. "How fortunate for me that I did not teach you more! Otherwise you would have been able to pursue me even here."

XII. THE DOG AND THE COCK.

Once upon a time a dog and a cock were sworn friends. But a famine fell on the land and the dog said to the cock, "There is no food for me here, so I am going away to another country. I tell you this that you may not blame me, and say, 'This dog was my friend, but he left me without a word!'" The cock answered, "O dog, we are both friends. If you go, I go. Let us go together, and as you are a dog you can forage for us both, since if I expose myself the village dogs will set on me and eat me

up." "Agreed," said the dog, "when I go for food, you shall hide in the jungle, and whatever I find I will fetch to you, and we'll share and share alike." So the two friends set out. After a time they began to approach a village, and the dog said, "Now I am going forward for food, but do you remain here. Only, first of all, if anything should happen to you when I am away, how shall I know it?" Said the cock, "Whenever you hear me crow several times, then hasten back to me." So for some time they lived happily, the dog bringing in supplies every day, while at night he slept beneath the tree on which the cock sat safely at roost.

One day in the absence of the dog, a jackal came to the tree and looking up, said, "O uncle, why, pray, are you perched so high? Come down and let us say our prayers together!" "Most willingly," answered the cock, "but first let me cry the bhangh* for all good Musalmans to come and join us." So the cock crew most lustily three or four times, until the dog in the village heard him, and said, "Ah something is about to happen to my friend—I must get back." He at once started for the jungle, but the jackal, when he perceived his approach, began to sneak off. Then cried the cock, "O good nephew, don't go away, stop at any rate for prayers. See, here's a pious neighbour coming to join us!" "Alas, friend, I would stop with pleasure," replied the jackal, "but it just occurs to my mind that I quite forgot to perform my ablutions.† Farewell!" And quickening his pace, he disappeared.

XIII. THE SILVERSMITH AND HIS MOTHER'S BANGLE.

Silversmiths as a class bear a bad reputation for mixing up an undue quantity of alloy in the silver of their customers. There was once a silversmith who in a moment of disinterestedness promised his mother that he would give her a bangle which should contain nothing but pure silver. "You are my mother," said he, "and I as your son who owe you so much cannot do less." So he cast a bangle for his mother out of unmixed silver, and when it was finished, he stored it up for her and went to bed. But he was quite unable to get a wink of sleep. He turned from side to side, and moaned and fretted in torment, frequently exclaiming, "Ah that wretched bangle! What a simpleton was I to make a bangle without alloy!" At last he could stand it no longer, so he got up, lighted his lamp, and did not rest until, having melted down the silver once more, he had recast it with a considerable admixture of base metal. Then with a conscience purged of offence he returned to his deserted couch, and in an instant he

* The Musalman cry to prayers is called the BHANGH. So also is the crow of a cock.

† Literally, "Proh dolor, amice, pepedi: domum redire me decet ut ablutiones meas perficiam. Vale!"—a satirical reference to the frivolous regard which the stricter Muhammadans pay to the punctilios of ceremonial washings.

was asleep, while a fat smile of pleasure and contentment betokened the satisfaction of his mind.

XIV. THE JACKAL AND THE VOICE OF FAME.

A jackal prowling round a village one evening was spied by some of the village dogs which instantly gave the alarm. At the same time some wayfarers began to point at him and cry, "See, there he goes, there he goes!" "This always strikes me as a most remarkable thing," said the jackal as he cleared off, "I haven't a single acquaintance out of my own set in the world, and yet wherever I go, everyone seems to know me! How inconvenient is fame!"

XV. THE FOUR ASSOCIATES.

Once upon a time a crow, a jackal, a hyena, and a camel swore a friendship, and agreed to seek their food in common. Said the camel to the crow, "Friend, you can fly. Go forth and reconnoitre the country for us." So the crow flew away from tree to tree, until he came to a fine field of mashmelons, and then he returned and reported the fact to his companions. "You," said he to the camel, "can eat the leaves, but the fruit must be the share of the jackal, the hyena, and myself." When it was night all four visited the field, and began to make a hearty supper. Suddenly the owner woke up and rushed to the rescue. The crow, the jackal and the hyena easily escaped, but the camel was caught and driven out with cruel blows. Overtaking his comrades, he said, "Pretty partners you are, to leave your friend in the lurch!" Said the jackal, "We were surprised, but cheer up, to-night we'll stand by you, and won't allow you to be thrashed again."

The next day the owner as a precaution covered his field with nets and nooses.

At midnight, the four friends returned again, and began devouring as before. The crow, the jackal and the hyena soon had eaten their fill, but not so the camel, who had hardly satisfied the cravings of hunger, when the jackal suddenly remarked, "Camel, I feel a strong inclination to bark." "For Heaven's sake don't," said the camel, "You'll bring up the owner, and then while you all escape, I shall be thrashed again." "Bark I must," replied the jackal who set up a dismal yell. Out from his hut ran the owner, but it happened that while the camel, the crow and the jackal succeeded in getting away, the stupid hyena was caught in a net. "Friends, friends" cried he "are you going to abandon me? I shall be killed." "Obey my directions" said the crow, "and all will be right." "What shall I do?" asked the hyena. "Lie down and pretend to be dead," said the crow, "and the owner will merely throw you out, after which you can

run away." He had hardly spoken when the owner came to the spot, and seeing what he believed to be a dead hyena, he seized him by the hind legs and threw him out of the field, when at once the delighted hyena sprang to his feet and trotted away. "Ah," said the man, "this rascal was not dead after all!"

When the four associates met again, the camel said to the jackal, "Your barking, friend, might have got me another beating. Never mind, all's well that ends well; to-day yours, to-morrow mine."

Some time afterwards the camel said, "Jackal, I'm going out for a walk. If you will get on my back, I'll give you a ride, and you can see the world." The jackal agreed, and stooping down the camel allowed him to mount on his back. As they were going along, they came to a village, whereupon all the dogs rushed out and began barking furiously at the jackal whom they eyed on the camel's back. Then said the camel to the jackal, "Jackal, I feel a strong inclination to roll." "For Heaven's sake, don't," pleaded the jackal, "I shall be worried." "Roll I must," replied the camel, and he rolled, while the village dogs fell on the jackal before he could escape, and tore him to pieces. Then the camel returned and reported the traitor's death to his friends, who mightily approved the deed.

XVI. THE JACKAL AND THE EWE SHEEP.

Once upon a time a certain jackal made a dash at a ewe-sheep hoping to catch her. The sheep rushed into a half-dry tank where she stuck in the mud. The jackal attempting to follow her stuck in the mud too. Then said the jackal, "O aunt, this is a bad business!" "O nephew," answered she, "it is by no means so bad as it will be soon, when my master appears. On his shoulder he will have a *sángal* (forked-stick), and behind him will follow his two dogs *Dabbú* and *Bholú*. One blow with his stick will hit you in two places, and his dogs will drag you out by the legs. Then, dear nephew, you will know this business is not so bad now as it will be then!"

XVII. THE PÁTHÁN AND THE PLUMS.*

There is a certain small black plum grown in the Hazará District, called the *Ámlok*, which, when dried, looks like a species of black beetle. One day a *Páthán* stopped in a bazaar and bought some of them, laying them in a corner of his *lunglí*. As he went along he took out a handful in which there chanced to be one of these beetles alive, and the little creature feeling the pressure of the man's hand began buzzing and squealing. But the *Páthán* determined to be deprived of no portion of his money's worth, said "Friend, you may buzz, or, friend, you may squeal, but in the measure

* This tale and "The *Páthán* and the Ass" ridicule two of the principal characteristics of the *Pátháns* according to popular estimation.

you came, and in the measure you'll go." Saying which he clapt the whole handful, plums and beetle together, into his mouth and devoured them.

XVIII. THE PÁTHÁN AND THE ASS.

A Páthán was one day sitting in a ferry-boat which was moored to the bank of the Indus. His talwár or sword lay by his side. Presently down came a countryman driving a donkey and requesting to be ferried across the river. The donkey, however, having come to the boat refused to enter, utterly regardless of entreaties, threats and blows. Suddenly the Páthán sprang from his seat, seized his tulwar, and at a blow smote off the donkey's head. "To a Páthán," cried he, "this stubborn pride is permissible; but to an ass—never!"

The people of Baner, though noted for their bravery, are considered by their neighbours as the most stupid of mankind, not even excepting weavers. This fact is illustrated by the following anecdotes:

XIX. THE BANER MAN AND THE MILL.

A Banerí came down to the Indus where he saw a water-mill at work. Said he to himself, "People say that God is known by His wonderful ways. Now here is a wonderful thing with wonderful ways though it has neither hands nor feet. It must be God." So he went forward and kissed the walls, but he merely cut his face with the sharp stones.

XX. ONE BANERÍ ASKED ANOTHER,

"If the Indus were set on fire where would the fishes go?" "They would get on the trees" said the other. Then said the first, "Are fishes like buffaloes to climb up trees?"*

XXI. THE WIDOW OF BANER.

There was a widow of Baner who had two sons. They had cut the harvest of their little ancestral field, and their two bullocks were treading out the grain, when suddenly the sky became overcast, and a storm of rain swept by. The poor silly woman instantly caught a certain familiar insect, a friend to man, and, running a needle and thread through it, hung it up to a neighbouring ber tree, as a charm to drive away the unwelcome shower. At the same time she addressed God in the following words: "O God, my boys are but children, and in this thing are innocent. But thou art a white-bearded man. Didst thou not see that this rain was not wanted for thrashing out my wheat?"

XXII. THE BANER MAN AND THE BOAT.

A countryman who had spent the whole of his life in the fastnesses

* This tale was not a mere invention of the story-teller. It is frequently told in ridicule of the dense stupidity of the Banerís.

of Baner and had never seen the Indus determined to perform a journey. Descending to the Yusafzai plains he made his way to Aṭak, and when he saw one of the large eight-oared ferry boats crossing with the flood to the opposite bank of the river, he cried to the bystanders—"What long legs that creature must have!"

XXIII. THE BANERÍ AND HIS DROWNED WIFE.

There was once a sudden flood in the Indus which washed away numbers of people, and among others, the wife of a certain Banerí. The distracted husband was wandering along the banks of the river looking for the dead body, when a countryman accosted him thus, "O friend, if, as I am informed, your wife has been carried away in the flood, she must have floated down the stream with the rest of the poor creatures. Yet you are going up the stream." "Ah sir," answered the wretched Banerí, "you did not know that wife of mine. She always took an opposite course to every one else. And even now that she is drowned, I know full well that, if other bodies have floated down the river, hers must have floated up!"

XXIV. THE MAN AND THE BEAR.

One day when the river was in flood, a certain dark object was seen floating down the stream. Thereupon a poor man, mistaking it for a log of wood, plunged into the water and swimming with vigorous strokes, seized it with both his hands. When too late he discovered that he was clasped in the shaggy embrace of a bear. "Ah," cried his friends from the shore, "let him go, let him go!" "Just what I am trying to do," answered the unhappy man, "but he won't let *me* go!"*

XXV. THE CROW AND ITS YOUNG.

An old mother crow was once engaged in giving sound advice to her newly fledged young ones. "Remember" said she, "your principal enemy will be man. Whenever you detect a man in the act of even stooping towards the ground as if for a stone, at once take wing and fly." "Very good," answered one of her precocious youngsters, "but what if the man happens to have a stone already in his hand? Can you advise us how we shall proceed then?"

XXVI. THE JACKAL AND THE FLEAS.†

There was once a jackal so infested with fleas that life was a burden to him. Determined to be rid of them, he sought for a pool of water, and

* Logs of deodár are frequently floated down the Indus from the Himálayas. During floods many of these logs are washed away from the "timber yards" far up in the mountains. For every log recovered the villagers along the banks receive a reward of four annas from the owners. Each log bears its owner's mark.

† The English fable of the Fox and the Fleas is almost exactly similar.

snatching up a small piece of dry wood in his mouth, he began to enter the water with 'measured steps and slow.' Gradually as he advanced, the astonished fleas rushed up his legs, and took refuge on his back. The rising water again drove them in multitudes from his back to his head, and from his head to his nose, whence they escaped on to the piece of wood which became perfectly black with them. When the sly jackal perceived the situation of his foes, he suddenly bobbed his head into the water, relinquished the wood, and with a chuckle swam back to the shore, leaving the fleas to their fate.

XXVII. THE ELEPHANT AND HIS KEEPER.*

There was an elephant which was accustomed to suffer most cruel treatment at the hands of his keeper, and the keeper knowing the sagacity of these animals, and being in fear of his life, used to sleep some little distance from the tree to which the elephant was tied. One night the elephant, taking up a long loose branch, chewed the end of it in order to separate the fibres, and having twisted them in the long hair of the sleeping man, he dragged him within reach and trampled him to death.

XXVIII. THE MISER AND THE GRAIN OF WHEAT.

A great miser was once sitting on a precipice and dangling his feet over the edge. Hunger having become insupportable, he took out his small bag of parched grain, and began to toss the food, grain by grain, into his mouth. All at once a single grain missed its destination and fell to the bottom of the ravine. "Ah what a loss!" cried he. "But even a grain of wheat is of value and only a simpleton would lose it." Whereupon he incontinently leaped down from the rock, and broke both his legs.

XXIX. THE MISER AND THE PICE.

A miser once found his way into the bazar to buy bread. The weather was unusually warm, and as he trudged along, the perspiration gathered round the coin, which was closely clutched in his hand. Arresting his steps, he gazed at the moist piece with a fond eye and said, "I won't spend you—weep not, dear Pice, we shall not separate after all—I will starve first!" So he restored the money to his bag, and begged for scraps from door to door.

XXX. THE TWO MISERS.

Once upon a time two misers hobnobbed together to eat their food. One of them had a small vessel of ghee into which he sparingly and grudgingly dipped his morsels of bread. The other miser, observing this, protested vehemently against such wasteful extravagance. "Why waste so

* This anecdote, told by a Panjábí, probably belongs to Hindústán.

much ghee," said he; "and why do you risk the waste of so much more, seeing that your bread might slip from your fingers and become totally immersed? Think better of it, and imitate me. I take my vessel of ghee, and hang it just out of reach to a nail in the wall. Then I point at the ghee my scraps of bread, one by one, as I eat, and I assure you I not only enjoy my ghee just as well, but I make no waste."*

XXXI. THE FALSE WITNESS.

A caravan of merchants came and pitched for the night at a certain spot on the way down to Hindústán. In the morning it was found that the back of one of the camels was so sore, that it was considered expedient not to load him again, but to turn him loose into the wilderness. So they left him behind. The camel, after grazing about the whole day, became exceedingly thirsty, and meeting a jackal, he said to him, "Uncle, uncle, I am very thirsty. Can you show me some water?" "I can show you water" said the jackal, "but if I do, you must agree to give me a good feed of meat from your sore back." "I do agree," said the camel, "but first show me the water." So he followed his small friend, until they came to a running stream, where he drank such quantities of water that the jackal thought he would never stop. He then with some politeness invited the jackal to his repast. "Come, uncle, you can now have your supper off my back." "Nay," said the jackal, "our agreement was that I should feed not off your back, but off your tongue, † dear nephew. This you distinctly promised, if I would take you to water." "Very well," replied the camel, "produce a witness to prove your words, and you can have it so." "A witness I have and will bring him presently," replied the jackal. So he went to the Wolf, and stating the case, persuaded him to witness falsely. "You see, wolf, if I eat the tongue, the camel will certainly die, and then we shall both have a grand feed to which we can invite all our friends." The two returned to the camel and the jackal appealing to the wolf asked, "Did not I engage to show the camel to water on condition that he would give me his tongue?" "Of course you did," said the

* This anecdote is an instance of the truth of the saying of Solomon—"There is no new thing under the sun." Many readers will be reminded of the Irish dish "Potatoes and point," consisting of a large supply of potatoes and of a very limited supply of meat, bacon, or even fish. The potatoes are eaten, but the more solid fare is merely pointed at. The following passage from Carlyle's "Count Cagliostro" refers to this singular custom—"And so the catastrophe ends by bathing our poor half-dead Recipiendary first in blood, then, after some genuflexions, in water; and 'serving him a repast composed of roots,'—we grieve to say, mere *potatoes—and—point!*"

† "Sore back" in Panjábí being *chigh*, and "tongue" *jib*, there was sufficient similarity of sound to suggest prevarication.

wolf confidently, "and the camel agreed." "Be it so;" said the camel, "as you both delight in lies and have no conscience, come and eat some of my tongue," and he lowered his head within reach of the jackal. But the latter said to the wolf, "Friend, you see what a diminutive animal I am. I am too weak to drag out that enormous tongue. Do you seize it and hold it for me." Then the wolf ventured his head into the camel's mouth to pull forward the tongue, but the camel instantly closed his powerful jaws, and crushing the skull of his enemy, he shook him to death. Meanwhile the jackal danced and skipped with glee, crying out, "Behold the fate of the false witness—behold the fate of the false witness!"*

XXXII. THE TRAVELLER AND HIS CAMEL.

Once upon a time a traveller, coming along the desert road with his laden camel, stopped to rest during the noon-tide heat under a shady tree. There he fell asleep. When he awoke he looked at the camel, and finding to his sorrow that the faithful companion of all his journeys was dead, he thus apostrophized him:—

"Where is the spirit fled, ah, where,
The life that cheered the weary ways?
Could'st thou not wait one hour, nor spare
For me, thy Friend, one parting gaze?"

कहाँ गिआ उह भौर जो उठावे भार नू।

चलती बार ना मिलिआ इस महरम यार नू॥ †

* This story is intended as a satire on the practice which prevails so widely among the natives of all parts of India of getting up false cases and procuring false witness in courts of law.

† Literally—"Where is the spirit fled which bore the load? When leaving, it saw not me its well-known friend!"